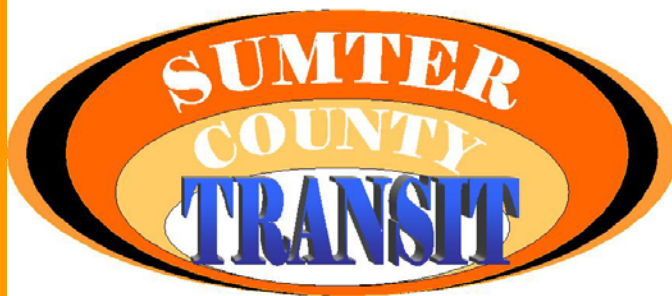


# PASSENGER GUIDE



Services provided by  
Ride Right, LLC

Sponsored by:  
Board of Sumter County Commissioners

***Bringing you award winning service***

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### INTRODUCTION

#### MISSION STATEMENT

*Sumter County Transit's mission is to ensure all citizens of Sumter County professional, efficient and cost-effective transportation services. Sumter County Transit will provide safe, clean, comfortable, and economical transportation and be alert to citizen needs and to prepare for those needs in a timely manner.*

This guide is designed to help you better understand Sumter County Transit (SCT). Transit is a department within the Community Services Division under the Board of Sumter County Commissioners.

Transit is a passenger transportation service provided for individuals who do not have access to any other means of transportation.

In this guide you will find information regarding policies and procedures to help you make every trip as convenient as possible.

Transit provides service for eligible individuals through several funding programs including Florida Department of Transportation, Medicaid, Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged, Mid-Florida Community Services, and Board of Sumter County Commissioners.

We provide more than 400 scheduled passenger trips per day using a variety of vehicles specially equipped to transport individuals with disabilities. Because the demand for these services is high, it is important for you to carefully follow the guidelines in this booklet.

## ELIGIBILITY

Residents who are interested in using the Sumter County Transit Transportation Disadvantaged Program must apply for services by completing a short eligibility application. You may call 352.568.6683 or download an application at [www.sumtercountyfl.gov](http://www.sumtercountyfl.gov).

Applications are evaluated and eligibility is determined based on Florida Statutes, Chapter 427, the sponsoring agency guidelines, and on the ability of the resident to use the deviated fixed-route service.

Sumter County Transportation Disadvantaged Program is available Monday-Friday. We work to have as many passengers in each vehicle as possible through multi-loading. All trips are subject to funding as well as vehicle and driver availability.

## HOLIDAYS

No service is provided on the following observed holidays:\*

New Year's Day

Memorial Day

Independence Day

Labor Day

Thanksgiving

Christmas Day

*\* Other holidays may be observed if approved by the Board of Sumter County Commissioners and Ride Right, LLC.*

### MAKING A RESERVATION

Reservation Hours:  
Monday-Friday from 8:00 AM-1:00 PM

Door-to-door transportation require a reservation. Passengers call 568-6683, Monday- Friday, to request service. The Transit office is closed weekends. Transportation service is provided on Saturday for dialysis treatment and hospital discharges only.

Reservations will not be honored by leaving a message on the voicemail. A reservation for a trip can only be made by speaking with a customer service representative.

Transit works on a first-come, first-served basis. We recommend you make reservations at least three (3) days in advance of your appointment. Our trips are based on a priority system with medical trips first, employment second, nutritional third, education fourth, and then all others.

The Transit office staff handles all applications for service and processes all reservation requests.

To make a reservation please call:

Local number	352.568.6683
Long Distance Toll Free number	1.866.568.6606
TD Helpline	1.800.983.2435
TTY:	1.800.955.8771

### CANCELLATIONS

You can cancel a scheduled trip by calling 352.568.6683 any time. Transit requests notification of cancellations as early as possible; however, you can cancel a trip without penalty up to the earliest applicable pickup time. A cancellation confirmation number will be issued to you by the receptionist. Messages for cancellations may be left on the voicemail system as long as it is before the pickup window.

## APPOINTMENT DESTINATION TIMES

Destination appointment times in Sumter County must be between 8:00 AM-3:00 PM with a pickup window of one and a half (1 ½) hours prior to your appointment time.

Destination appointments out of Sumter County must be between 9:00 AM-2:00 PM with a pickup window of two (2) hours prior to your appointment time.

Destination appointments in Gainesville must be between 8:00 AM-12:00 AM, Monday, Wednesday, or Friday with a pickup window of three (3) hours prior to your appointment time.

## NO SHOWS

We rely on the cooperation of all our passengers to make the system run smoothly. If you must cancel a trip it is important for you to call the office before your pickup window opens. Scheduled trips not cancelled prior to the earliest applicable pickup time are considered “no shows” costing you \$2.00. “No shows” also result when passengers are not at the arranged pickup locations or are not ready to board the vehicle. A “no show” fee of \$2.00 will apply each time you fail to cancel your trip. The driver fills out and leaves a “no show” door hanger at the pickup location.

Three “no shows” within a 90-day period are grounds for up to a 30-day suspension of service. Transit will provide written notice to the rider prior to suspending a rider’s service. A suspension may be waived if there are extenuating circumstances or the passenger demonstrates the problems causing the “no shows” have been resolved.

## ESCORT REQUIREMENTS

Passengers unable to travel alone must have an escort. The escort will be allowed free travel on SCT and contracted vehicles. Children under the age of 15, because of safety considerations, are required to have an escort.

## SUMTER COUNTY TRANSIT

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### BUS FARE

#### Door-to-Door:

\$1.50	One-Way In-County, Monday-Friday
\$2.00	One-Way Out of County, Monday-Friday
\$8.00	One-Way to Gainesville, Monday/ Wednesday/ Friday

#### Shuttle:

.50	One-Way, Shuttle Stop to Shuttle Stop
\$1.00	One-Way, deviation off Shuttle Stop

50% discount applies for seniors (60+)

Your drivers know how much your trips cost. You are expected to pay for your ride each time you board the vehicle. If you do not have the correct fare, the driver will make change in bus tokens. Tokens may be used for future trips. Drivers are not allowed to stop for you to get change. All fares are expected to be paid at the time of service, unless previously approved by the Transit Manager. Drivers are not allowed to accept tips. Please notify the office if any driver asks for or accepts a tip.

### LOST ITEMS

If you lose a personal item and believe it may be on a Transit vehicle, call 352.568.6683. If the item is found, you may be asked to come by the office to pick up the item. If the item is not located on the vehicle, Transit and its employees will not be held responsible for its replacement.

### COMPLIMENTS AND COMPLAINTS

Compliments and complaints are always welcomed. Please feel free to call 352-689-4447 to tell us of any incidents either good or bad.

[illegible]



**SUMTER COUNTY TRANSIT**  
**BLANK FOR YOUR NOTES**

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**AS A RIDER WITH SUMTER COUNTY TRANSIT YOU HAVE A RIGHT TO:**

1. Trips in air-conditioned and heated vehicles
2. Safe, clean, properly equipped, and smoke-free vehicles
3. Properly fastened seatbelts and/or mobility device tie downs
4. Vehicle transfer points that are sheltered, secure, and safe
5. A properly identified driver
6. Adequate seating, to include ample space for service animals
7. Assistance in maneuvering mobility devices up and down at a maximum one step
8. Transit policy on medical emergency during transport
9. Professional, courteous, and properly trained drivers
10. Assistance while getting in and out of vehicle and to the seat
11. Assistance with up to five plastic grocery packages
12. File complaints without fear of retaliation
13. Prompt investigations and effective resolutions
14. Current and complete program information
15. Pickups between 90 minutes before and 90 minutes after scheduled appointment times
16. Expect drivers to wait 5 minutes but no longer than 5 minutes
17. Toll-free accessibility to Transit
18. Be delivered to an appointment on time
19. Transit's policy on standing orders
20. Transit's policy on no-shows
21. Service animal accommodation

We expect riders to conform to the basic standards, make appropriate reservations, and payment of fare. You can expect Transit to provide clean, efficient, courteous transportation service.

### AS A RIDER WITH SUMTER COUNTY TRANSIT IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO:

1. Be ready and waiting for vehicle in a safe location at your pickup window time
2. Wear proper attire, including shirts and shoes
3. Regular and normal personal hygiene
4. Not to eat, drink, or smoke while in the vehicle
5. Keep seat belts and mobility device tie downs secure until vehicle stops
6. Remain seated until vehicle comes to a complete stop
7. Report any safety hazards
8. Keep wheelchairs or other mobility aids in good condition
9. Not to tamper with or operate vehicle equipment
10. Address car seat provision with Transit office
11. Make Transit aware of customer's physical and/or mental conditions prior to transport
12. Adhere to policy for violent and/or disruptive behavior
13. Call in trip cancellations prior to pickup window
14. Inform Transit of all pertinent information regarding trip
15. Maintain your own oxygen equipment
16. Give the correct fare to the driver
17. Provide Transit with pertinent information
18. Advise the receptionist of appointment times
19. Accept a shared-ride service
20. Schedule trip requests 72 hours in advance
21. Provide own wheelchair and/or escort

For the comfort of all our passengers we ask that you do not spray perfume, cologne, or anything else while on the bus.

## PASSENGER BEHAVIOR

Passengers may have their transportation services suspended for violating the guidelines in this handbook or any action detrimental to the welfare of other passengers, staff or the program.

The following behaviors or conditions are unacceptable for travel on Transit vehicles or those of any service provider used by our program.

- ⇒ Intoxication
- ⇒ Not being polite
- ⇒ Harassment of driver or passengers
- ⇒ Use of profane or obscene language
- ⇒ Smoking
- ⇒ Disruptive Behavior
- ⇒ Dangerous Behavior
- ⇒ Physical Abuse
- ⇒ Providing False Information
- ⇒ Interference with Service Animals
- ⇒ Weapons
- ⇒ Carrying or using illegal drugs
- ⇒ Conditions offensive to other passengers or bus driver; e.g., lack of personal cleanliness or personal hygiene (body odor)

Passengers who do not conform to these standards will be given two verbal or written requests to comply. If there is a third incident of non compliance, the passenger may be denied service for a minimum period of 30 days or termination of services.

## ACCESS TO INFORMATION

Upon request and free of charge, all printed material will be made available to users of our transportation service in accessible formats for persons with disabilities in a form that the person can use which may include large print, audiotape, and Braille. This would include but not be limited to, schedules, general information brochures, rider handbooks, and service bulletins.

### POLICIES OF TRANSIT

Drivers are required to provide any reasonable assistance needed by passengers while getting on and off the bus. Heavy lifting by the driver is not permitted.

Drivers are not permitted to perform any medical assistance; e.g., changing/adjusting oxygen bottles or any other assistance they may not be qualified to perform. If there is any doubt they will contact dispatch for instructions.

Drivers are not allowed to assist wheelchair passengers up or down more than one step, unless it can be performed safely as determined by the passenger and/or guardian and driver.

When transporting passengers with impaired eyesight, drivers will announce stops so passengers will know when they are at their stop.

Drivers will go to the passenger's door to announce arrival, except in the case of a bad dog sign. Drivers will not enter your home.

Drivers are required to announce and identify themselves by name and agency at time of pickup. The exception is when the driver regularly transports the passenger on a recurring basis.

### ACCESS TO COMMUNICATION

A person with speech and/or hearing impairments can access information provided by telephone. This can be done by utilizing telecommunications relay services.

Transit uses the Florida Relay Services provided by the Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged at 1-800-955-8771. The service is available 24 hours per day, every day. The user must have a TTY machine in which to type messages and return messages are typed for them to read.

## REPORTING OF FRAUD/ABUSE

Fraud is an intentional deception or misrepresentation made by a person with the knowledge that the deception results in unauthorized benefit to him/her.

Abuse is a practice inconsistent with generally accepted business or transportation standards resulting in an unnecessary cost to the program.

Upon detection of a potential or suspected fraud or abuse by a passenger, Transit is required to file a report with the Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged. Such reporting may lead to interruptions in transportation services.

## OMBUDSMAN

Ombudsman services are offered by the Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged (CTD) to provide transportation disadvantaged customers with an avenue to voice concerns about the coordinated transportation system and also as a means to provide information about the transportation disadvantaged program. All calls that concern the local transportation carrier will be referred to the appropriate local staff for handling. CTD staff will follow-up with the customer to ensure the concern has been addressed.

In addition, the CTD Helpline staff assists in resolving consumer concerns by acting as an advocate or mediator on the caller's behalf.

Helpline hours are 8:00 AM-5:00 PM, Monday-Friday.

The CTD Helpline number is **1-800-983-2435**.

### QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN (QIP)

Sumter County Transit is in compliance with the Commission for Transportation Disadvantaged QIP. This ensures our transportation services are delivered in an appropriate, timely, accessible and available fashion. We aim to maintain quality and improve transportation for you. If you would like more information on Sumter County Transit's QIP and performance measures please contact the office at 689-4447.

### PASSENGER CONFIDENTIALITY

Drivers and office staff are not permitted to discuss their own personal business, the passengers personal business or any non-factual county government business with passengers. Socializing with the passengers is not prohibited; however, it is not recommended.

Passenger information is strictly confidential and will not be discussed with anyone outside the Community Services Division or County Administrator's office and only on a need-to-know basis.

*The previous statement must be adhered to due to laws governing the privacy of health information, such as, "The Standards for Privacy of Individually Identifiable Health Information ("Privacy Rule") which establishes a set of national standards for the protection of certain health information. The US Department of Health and Human Services issued the Privacy Rule to implement the requirement of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA).*

**SUMTER COUNTY TRANSIT**  
strives to provide the best possible service  
to all county residents.

**DIAL 911 FOR ALL EMERGENCIES**

**FOR AFTER-HOURS, NON-EMERGENCY TRANSPORTATION,  
DIAL 568-6683 AND LISTEN FOR THE ON-CALL SERVICE  
PROVIDER CONTACT INFORMATION.**



Phone: 352-568-6683  
Fax: 352-568-6680  
E-mail: [sumtercountytransit@sumtercountyfl.gov](mailto:sumtercountytransit@sumtercountyfl.gov)  
Long Distance Only: 1-866-568.6606